

\*Note: At this point, I begin to review the highlights of 1972, which will be identified as 239.doc. Start with January 1972. Start a new floppy disk. FD-I (1972):239.doc.

#### COSATI UPGRADE

The year 1971 was coming to an end and so was an era. About a decade earlier, it was decided by the Director of OST that a stronger COSATI was needed. NSF, recognizing its legal responsibilities to implement Title IX, Higher Defense Education Act, had created an interagency group. After trying to make it work, NSF concluded that it lacked the leverage needed to coordinate Federal STI. By agreement with the President's Science Adviser, Donald Hornig, the COSATI mechanism, a committee of the Federal Council for Science and Technology, Executive Office of the President, was established to take over this function. The first leaders of COSATI were high level military officers in the R&E directorate in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. This choice was considered to be logical because DOD then had the major R&D program in the Federal government and it was gearing up for a major DOD STI program. After agreeing with Senator Hubert Humphrey that a major Federal STI program should be put in place, Dr. Hornig decreed that OST and COSATI, operating out of his office, would take over STI responsibility better to assure its success. During this period and terminating at the end of 1971, COSATI and OST sought vigorously to administer the Federal STI program, often drawing censure from individuals in OMB, largely because of the size and vigor of the program. But there was another kind of criticism that should be mentioned.

Karl Olsoni, at one time an international information specialist in NSF, but subsequently transferred out of OSIS, prepared a paper on NSF and STI, which made a few a recommendation paraphrased along these lines:

The COSATI concept of the 1960-1970 period was what was needed in the Post-Sputnik era, and in accomplishing what had to be done, was a great step forward. In the meantime, new developments have greatly expanded the national concern for information. New challenges and opportunities brought on by new information technology in the last few years should now raise the level of national concern at least up to cabinet level, this mainly because of the national and international political and financial implications of more potent information programs. The present cast of Federal STI members in COSATI are operating at a level deemed below what seems to be wise for the government and for society. The OECD Whitehead report recognizes this state of affairs. This calls on OECD to reorganize its information, computing and communication activities into one new committee, operating at the level of OECD's science and technology apparatus. One of the original sponsors of this approach for OECD is Andrew A. Aines, who has headed COSATI for the last half-decade.

Accordingly, it seems to me that the COSATI membership should consist of the Federal agency deputy assistant secretaries for science and technology and their counterparts in other agencies (267).

(267) Olsoni, Karl, NSF International Office, Unofficial Memorandum to Andrew A. Aines, COSATI and the Responsibilities of 1970-1980, October 18, 1971, pp 2.

Olsoni's views, which had considerable relevance, came at an impossible time. COSATI was under attack or at least its performance was being questioned. The Science Information Council, NSF, called on OST to transfer the chairmanship of COSATI to OSIS-NSF, inferring that COSATI's unspecified "problems" would be solved by NSF. The new management in OST and FCST were either not well indoctrinated about Federal STI problems or they gave it a lower priority than it deserved. Increasingly, the President was becoming disenchanted about the science and technology community and this must have been preying on the mind of his Science Adviser. My own views were ambivalent. I saw more clearly than other involvees that COSATI was making a contribution, but that it was taking considerable effort to achieve incremental gains, largely because, as mentioned elsewhere, COSATI, its parent FCST, and OST were short on power to force action. The ranks of the original group of Federal STI managers were thinning rapidly. The stout supporters we had in Congress were being replaced by others not as supportive imaginative or aggressive. But it was quite evident to me that the challenges and needs that brought the Federal STI effort into being originally were increasing and becoming even more complex, as the Federal agencies and private sector groups began to move into the world of electronic databases and networks. Obviously, although Olsoni's argument had some merit, it came at a trying time for Federal STI. When his memorandum was received, it was recognized that Federal STI matters were on a decline because of the Science Advisor's decision and there was no easy way to get key people, who could make a difference, to expand the Federal STI program.